From: Jamie Piperberg
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 3:49pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

The proposed settlement for the Microsoft Anti-trust case is a good
step, but it needs to go farther. Microsoft doesn't just need to be
punished for their blatant anti-competitive practices, they need to be
punished for some of the more subtle things as well, specifically making
it easier for people to write a competing software product.

   Micorsoft Office is used almost exclusively throughout the business
world. I don't use it if I can avoid it, but I still have to be able to
read the file formats, and send documents to others in those formats.
The file formats for all MS Office applications should be opened to the
public. Competing products need to be able to read and write
Microsoft's format as well, if not better than Microsoft in order to
have any chance of competing. Although the formats for Microsoft Word,
Excel, Access, and Powerpoint may not be the best formats for the job,
they have become the default standard and like any other standard it
needs to be available for everyone to use. What would have happened to
the internet if each web browser used different versions of html and
wouldn't release the specific specs? You would need multiple browsers
open at once depending on which webpage you wanted to look at. Large
companies would have to make several versions of their webpage in order
to allow anyone to look at it. It would have been a disaster. But
Microsoft has moved in there too. There are many webpages out there
that do not render correctly in Netscape or other competing browsers
(Opera, iCab, OmniWeb, Konqueror etc.) because they use Internet
Explorer specific calls. One company should not be able to define the
standards for any major aspect of computing, , especially not one as
widespread as the internet.

   Microsoft also needs to be forced to release more of their API's to
the public so competitors have a chance of making their applications run
on par with Microsofts. Microsoft has the unfair advantage of knowing
all the tricks with the operating system because they wrote it too,
They're allowed to see the API's, everyone else should be allowed to
too.

   Thank you for your concern, and please don't let Microsoft win this
battle. It would be very bad for the computing industry as a whole.
Thank you,
   Jamie Piperberg